

## Against the Grain

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### People Profile: Sam Brooks

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Interview — Sam Brooks  
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getting to know employees and making decisions regarding the future. We will be bringing product support into our Ipswich operation. As decisions are made, we will be communicating appropriately.

**ATG:** *Is EBSCO contemplating any other ground shaking mergers that you'd like to give ATG the scoop on?*

**SB:** EBSCO believes strongly that the best possible search results come from a relevancy ranking algorithm built on searching a combination of full-text and high-quality subject indexing from controlled vocabularies. This means we will continue to be the leader in licensing full text and in acquiring subject indexes. Other than **H.W. Wilson**, I don't have any I can report today, but it's safe to say that we are interested in talking to any provider of high-quality subject indexes or any other publisher of valuable research databases. 🐼

Rumors  
from page 34

Librarian at **Purdue**) are planning to guest edit the February 2012 issue of **ATG**!! They are planning this in between having babies and all that! Both **Mark** and **Charles**. **Charles** and his wife **Heather** just welcomed **Alexander** and we hope to hear about **Mark** and his wife's new addition soon! Oh! And, my husband and I gave both of our children three names instead of two, that's in addition to the last name and, boy, have they complained about it. So — I was gratified to learn that **Charles** and **Heather** gave their child three names — **Alexander Lloyd Duncan**. And **Charles** has three names as well — **Charles Thomas Godfrey** as does **Anthony** — **Anthony Richard Kirk**. It's tradition! And **Charles** says that he's trying to "keep everyone [in the family] happy." Is that a future **Charleston Conference** theme?

Met one of the most energetic people that I have ever encountered the other day! **Ava Jordan** of **BookConsignments.com** based in my back yard — **Summerville, SC**. **Ava** is planning to attend the **Conference** both as an exhibitor and an attendee which is great. She says that she got so many suggestions that she attend from librarians in South Carolina and everywhere! Like Wow! Thanks, Guys and Gals!

Speaking of the **31st Charleston Conference**, the registrations are rolling in! More than last year even! Surprising! We are planning for a third overflow room (if possible) for Plenary Sessions in the **Francis Marion** and several of my go-getter co-workers are looking for bigger venues in downtown Charleston.

Just heard that **Mark Herring** is planning an article on **QRcodes** for the November issue! It will only be available at [www.against-the-grain.com/](http://www.against-the-grain.com/). That **Mark**! Hard to keep up with all his ideas! Stay tuned! [www.against-the-grain.com/](http://www.against-the-grain.com/)

Returning to new jobs, **Elisabeth Leonard**, once Associate Dean for Library Services,

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# against the grain people profile

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## Sam Brooks

**BORN & LIVED:** I was born in Stamford, CT and have lived most of my life in Boston, MA; I have also lived in New York City and several parts of California.

**PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES:** I've been in charge of the worldwide sales and marketing efforts of **EBSCO Publishing** since 1991. I'm also heavily involved in gathering market research and ensuring that it impacts the company's product development efforts. I helped build and maintain our 17 long-standing advisory boards and numerous focus groups. I've also considered it important to be active in library science literature, and have written papers in major library science journals, e.g., *Serials Review*, *The Library Quarterly*, *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, *Information Technology and Libraries*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, etc., as well as the library publications of more than a dozen countries, including *Hungarian Journal of Library & Information Science (Hungary)*, *KLC Journal (Kazakhstan)*, *EBIB (Poland)*, *Librarianship (Russia)*, *Journal of Educational Media & Library Sciences (Taiwan)*, and many others. I co-edited a book for **The Haworth Press** (now **Taylor & Francis Informa**) entitled "Library/Vendor Relationships," published simultaneously as an issue of *The Journal of Library Administration* (Vol. 44, Nos. 3/4.). I have participated in panel discussions or appeared as a speaker at various library conferences, including **ACRL Chapter Meetings**, **IFLA**, **The Charleston Conference**, **ALCTS Networked Resources and Metadata Committee Meeting**, **International Congress of Information, LITA Technology and Access Committee Meeting**, **NLA Tri-Round Table (Technical Services, Information & Technology)**, etc. I'm a member of the **EBSCO Founder's Club**, and after 20 great years with the company, I can't imagine working anywhere else.

**MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT:** I guess I need to give you two answers, because one is personal and one is professional, but both are career accomplishments. From a personal standpoint, it is not even close. I've traveled to 92 countries with **EBSCO**, and much of that travel was to developing nations. We sought and gained special permission from publishers to make extraordinary offers to governments in emerging countries, and then we traveled to meet with ministers of education, science & technology, etc. to attempt to convince them of the value of national licenses for full-text journal databases for their universities and hospitals. This was hugely successful, and today, **EBSCO** has more than fifty national licenses with most of those being developing nations. From a purely professional standpoint, I believe it would have to be participating in the decision to listen to our advisors and put an unprecedented investment in time and funding into **EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS)**. We started development as early as other discovery services, but made a conscious decision to delay the release so we could incorporate content and features that would give our service tremendous long-term advantages over those other services. It was a risky decision, because it gave our competitors the ability to get a head start in selling their services, but I believe strongly that it will prove to have been the right decision for **EBSCO** and for libraries.

**HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS:** Libraries (and library vendors) are competing with **Google** for the attention of end users. This is perhaps the most important mid-term and long-term issue facing our industry. Libraries and library vendors have many things that are not available free on the Web, but perhaps the two greatest differentiators are valuable full-text sources (such as journals, magazines, and books) and high-quality subject indexing from controlled vocabularies. It is the segmentation of library collections, and the abundance of platforms, that makes it difficult for end users to realize the true value of the library (and its vendors). I believe that within five years, the majority of academic libraries will have a discovery service — in an attempt to address this issue. The service that does the best job of leveraging the strength of the library collection (for-fee, full-text sources and high-quality subject indexing) will be the one that is prevalent five years from now. In addition, I think we will see a big shift from print books to eBooks (hence **EBSCO's** acquisition of **NetLibrary** and development of eBooks on **EBSCOhost**), and I believe we will see an explosion of usage of library resources via smartphones, e-readers and tablets. The **EBSCOhost iPhone** app has experienced a remarkable number of downloads, and we are working on an **Android** app that we also expect to have massive usage within five years. Libraries and their vendors must embrace all of these changes, as they will make us more relevant, rather than less relevant, if we handle them properly. 🐼